

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Russia 1917: First example  
of workers taking power  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 74/NO. 44 NOVEMBER 22, 2010

## Airline workers campaign for unionization at Delta

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

MINNEAPOLIS—In the first of four votes at Delta Air Lines, the fight for a union among flight attendants narrowly lost. The vote was 9,216 for and 9,544 against. More than 93 percent of flight attendants from the combined workforces of Delta and Northwest Airlines voted in the election that ended November 3.

A day after the union loss at Delta, some 3,000 fleet and passenger service workers at Piedmont Airlines voted by a 2 to 1 margin to join the Communication Workers of America

(CWA). The union won the election in spite of “Piedmont and parent company US Airways using every anti-union trick in the book,” said a statement from the CWA following the vote.

The next three votes at Delta will determine if workers are to be represented by the International Association of Machinists (IAM). About 14,000 fleet service (baggage and cargo) workers will be voting through November 18. Approximately 600 stock clerk and supply attendants are voting through November 22, and an-

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## Fed prints money to ‘stimulate’ economy Dollar drop heightens trade tensions



AP Photo/Amy Sancetta

Mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were major recipients of earlier government “stimulus” money, but remain in dire straits and are asking for billions more in government aid. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of workers continue to lose housing to foreclosures.

BY SETH GALINSKY

The U.S. Federal Reserve Board’s decision to, in effect, print \$600 billion in the hope of stimulating bank lending has no more chance of promoting productive economic activity than previous “stimulus” efforts. At the same time its effect of lowering

the relative value of the dollar, providing an edge in competition for world market share, has already exacerbated trade tensions around the world.

The November 3 announcement that the Federal Reserve would inject dollars into the banking system

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### Attempt to organize fast food chain ‘captured imagination’



Picket line outside Jimmy John's sandwich restaurant in Minneapolis. Union narrowly lost election to organize sandwich workers, meat cutters, and delivery workers at 10 shops in Minneapolis area by a two-vote margin. (See article on page 5.)

## U.S. gov’t discusses widening covert operations in Yemen

BY CINDY JAQUITH

As part of preparations to expand U.S. military operations against al-Qaeda forces in Yemen, the White House is looking to place “elite U.S. hunter-killer teams” in the country under direct command of the CIA, U.S. officials told the *Wall Street Journal*. Such a move would allow Washington to strike at targets in Yemen “without the explicit blessing of the Yemeni government” and “would provide deniability to the Yemeni government,” the *Journal* said.

The *Journal* article was printed a few days after the October 29 interception in Britain and Dubai of two mail bombs from Yemen addressed to synagogues in Chicago. Government officials in the United States and United Kingdom said the bombs were made by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and were powerful enough to have blown up the planes carrying them.

Over the last year Washington has carried out aerial bombings and sea-launched cruise missile strikes targeting AQAP in Yemen. Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh has sought to disown his government’s complicity

in the unpopular U.S. operations, which have killed dozens of civilians.

The central government of Yemen has limited authority outside of Sana’a, the capital city. It faces not only opposition from al-Qaeda, but a

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## Gov’t secrecy grows with ‘transparency’

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In the latest move to legitimize government secrecy, an executive order issued by President Barack Obama November 4 announced a program to standardize procedures for restricting public access to “unclassified” information. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) praised the order as “a welcome step toward ensuring that our government agencies can no longer withhold information without oversight.” Meanwhile, the administration builds on its record as the most

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## ‘Workers Power,’ ‘Militant’ sales expand among workers



Militant/Cecelia Moriarty

John Naubert, who was Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Washington State, introducing *Militant* and *Workers Power* book at immigrant rights demonstration, one of many actions where socialists campaigned with book and *Militant* during fall drive.

BY PAUL MAILHOT

Hundreds of workers on the job, young people on campuses, and individuals involved in political activity picked up copies of *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and the *Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes and subscriptions to the *Militant* newspaper over the past two months. In all, 1,776 copies of the book and 2,031 subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold.

One feature of this drive was the receptivity among factory workers to discussions about the crisis of capitalism and what is the road forward for

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# Sahrawi protesters clash with Moroccan forces

BY ANGEL LARISCY

Moroccan military forces raided a Sahrawi protest camp in Western Sahara November 8, using tear gas, flames, and pressure hoses to wipe out the settlement. Five Moroccan security officials were killed; 19 demonstrators were killed and hundreds injured, reported the Madrid daily *El Pais*.

For 35 years Morocco has occupied the Sahrawi nation in Western Sahara—with the backing of the U.S., Spanish, and French governments. Washington has been the leading arms supplier and military adviser to the Moroccan monarchy. The Moroccan occupation stands in violation of UN resolutions and a decision by the International Court of Justice.

In mid-October, Sahrawi independence fighters set up the huge Gdim Izik tent camp six miles from the city of El Aaiún to protest poor living conditions. El Aaiún is the main city in Western Sahara.

Following the raid and destruction of the camp, fighting spread to the city with several buildings set on fire. Demonstrators took to the streets waving flags of the Polisario Front, the organization leading the fight for independence in Western Sahara.

It was one of the biggest anti-government protests in decades.

Mohamed Guelmous, the Moroccan governor of El Aaiún, said that government forces were attacked as they were going to the camp to arrest “troublemakers.”

Further slandering the independence fighters, the interior ministry

said the 163 people who were arrested were “opportunists, some with criminal records, trying to take political advantage of the protest over living conditions in El Aaiún.”

The Polisario Front was founded in 1973 to struggle against Spanish rule. In 1975 Madrid divided the mineral-rich colony between the African nations of Morocco and Mauritania. In 1979 Polisario forces defeated the Mauritanian army, but Moroccan troops moved in to occupy more of the country.

The Polisario Front has been able to liberate about 20 percent of Western Sahara. The majority of the Sahrawi population—200,000—are forced to live in refugee camps in southwest Algeria and other locations.

In the aftermath of the raid and protests, schools and offices were closed in El Aaiún.

The next day Moroccan police and military patrolled the streets. Most residents stayed indoors, reported AP.

## San Francisco: Rally defends immigrant rights



Militant/Eric Simpson

SAN FRANCISCO—Several hundred people rallied outside the federal courthouse here November 1 to oppose the new Arizona anti-immigrant law, which went into effect July 29. Inside, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was hearing an appeal by the state of Arizona of a federal court ruling that blocked implementation of parts of the law, including the section requiring police to determine a person’s immigration status if there is “reasonable suspicion” that the person may be undocumented. A few dozen supporters of Arizona’s anti-immigrant statute attempted to disrupt the protest but were outnumbered.

—ERIC SIMPSON

# Israel parliament opens door to civil marriages

BY SETH GALINSKY

Israel’s parliament recently opened the door to some civil marriages. Prior to the new law, all marriages and divorces in Israel were performed by religious courts— Jewish rabbinical, Islamic sharia, Christian ecclesiastical, or Druze.

Citizens of Israel who do not adhere to any religion, as well as those

seeking to marry someone from a different religion, could only get married outside Israel and then have the marriage recognized by the state on their return.

The law permitting civil marriages was first approved in March, but could not be implemented until the fee for the civil marriage certificate was set November 3. It applies to some 60,000 people defined as “non-denomination” Israelis.

The law was passed on the initiative of Yisrael Beiteinu (Israel Is Our Home), a nationalist party led by Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman. A big base of support for the party is Russian immigrants.

Because rabbinical courts often say that Russian immigrants are not Jewish according to orthodox Jewish rules, many are unable to legally marry. More than one million Russians have immigrated to Israel since 1989.

The debate over civil marriage has raged in Israel for decades. Attempts to change the law in the 1950s failed. Opponents worried that allowing civil unions would dilute the Jewish character of the Israeli state. “One out of three Jewish men in the U.S. wed Christian women,” said the deputy minister of religious affairs at the time. “This must not be permitted to happen in Israel.”

Some supporters of civil marriage say the law does not go far enough. They say it gives Israeli religious courts the power to reject statements by applicants that they are not a member of a religious group, thus making them ineligible for a civil marriage certificate.

The member of parliament who introduced the law said it’s a first step and that he would like to see civil union “extended to any person who desires it, not just those without an officially defined religion.”

## THE MILITANT

### Social disaster in Haiti continues

*Ten months after an earthquake devastated Haiti, cholera has broken out there. Washington maintains its indifference toward Haitian toilers, while the government of Cuba continues to provide critical medical care. Follow this story in the pages of the ‘Militant.’*



UN photo/Pasqual Gorriz

Cuban doctors treat child in Port-au-Prince one month after Haiti earthquake.

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Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Cindy Jaquith, Angel Lariscy, Omari Musa, Doug Nelson, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams

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# Cop gets two years for killing of Oscar Grant

BY JAMES HARRIS

LOS ANGELES—Johannes Mehserle was sentenced to a two-year prison term here in Los Angeles Superior Court November 5. Mehserle is the first cop in California to face a murder trial for a line-of-duty killing in 15 years, and the first police officer ever convicted in California's Bay Area for shooting a Black man.

Mehserle was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter in the killing of Oscar Grant, a 22-year-old grocery store worker Jan. 1, 2009, as Grant lay face down on an Oakland train station platform. Mehserle's defense asserted he mistakenly drew his gun when he intended to use a Taser on Grant. The prosecution disputed this claim, pointing out that Mehserle did not mention the Taser story until days after the shooting.

Grant's killing was witnessed by a large number of people who were on the platform at the time, some of whom filmed the events on their cell phones. The pictures show Mehserle shooting a prone and defenseless Grant.

Mehserle's trial and sentencing took place in Los Angeles because his defense won a change in venue, citing too much publicity about the killing in the Bay Area for Mehserle to get a fair trial.

Judge Robert Perry read his verdict to the 50 people crammed into his tiny courtroom. Only five seats, determined by a lottery, were given to the public, which is how this reporter got in. Most of the seats were reserved for family members of Mehserle and Grant and major media.

Before the verdict, Perry read from some of the thousands of letters he said he received on the case. He said those letters that drew attention to systemic racism in the U.S. criminal justice system particularly incensed him. These views contradicted the fact that the country has elected an African-American president, he commented.

Perry angered many of those present when he said that the case was a very difficult one for him. He said there were really two tragedies—the first being that Oscar Grant had lost his life and the other that Mehserle had permanently lost a promising career.

Perry spent so much time expressing his sympathy for Mehserle, while simultaneously encouraging the defense attorneys to pursue mistrial motions, that many of those in the courtroom left before hearing the sentence. Supporters of the Grant family assumed Perry was

going to release Mehserle. With obvious reluctance, the judge sentenced Mehserle to two years—the minimum sentence—minus the 292 days already served.

Before the verdict, Mehserle's lawyers aggressively pursued several motions to overturn the guilty verdict and get a new trial. Judge Perry spoke to each of them, weighing their pros and cons. He agreed with the cop's lawyer that he had wrongly instructed the jury that gun enhancement laws could be applied to the involuntary manslaughter verdict. In Mehserle's case, gun enhancement could have added 10 years to the sentence.

Gun enhancement laws increase a sentence where a gun is used in the commission of a crime. These laws are typically used against working-class defendants, especially Blacks and Latinos.

Following the hearing, a small dem-



AP Photo/Noah Berger

**Demonstrator arrested in Oakland, California, November 5 at protest following sentencing of former cop who fatally shot Oscar Grant in the back while he was pinned on ground.**

onstration outside the courthouse here denounced the light sentence.

In Oakland, a rally of hundreds took place in front of Oakland City Hall, with one speaker after another expressing outrage at the judge's rulings. After the rally drew to a close some of the protest-

ers began a march toward the Fruitvale train station. En route hundreds of police in riot gear encircled marchers, taking advantage of rock throwing from within the crowd, to arrest more than 150 people on charges of vandalism, unlawful assembly, and disturbing the peace.

## Cop brutality is issue for labor movement

BY BETSEY STONE

OAKLAND—Police brutality is a labor issue. That was a theme of the rally organized by Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) October 23, two weeks before the sentencing of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) cop who shot and killed

### AS I SEE IT

22-year-old grocery store worker Oscar Grant.

The rally was endorsed by the San Francisco and Alameda County labor councils and other union locals and attracted hundreds of trade unionists, including workers who had never before participated in such a protest.

It also sparked a debate in the union movement about how labor should respond to police brutality. Some questioned whether unions should be involved in issues not directly related to conditions on the job. Others argued that cops are union brothers and sisters, and therefore the ILWU shouldn't organize protests against them.

Dwight McElroy, president of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1021 in Oakland, was one of the speakers at the rally. McElroy said he received a letter from a cop protesting his participation on the basis that the rally was directed against the Oakland Police Association. "I'm going because I'm against police brutality," McElroy said

he responded. "I'm not anti-cop," he said, but against individual police who abuse people.

One of those opposed to unions getting involved on any basis was John Arantes, president of SEIU Local 1021 at BART. "Our first and foremost concern is for the safety of our front line workers; who not only rely on the goodwill of the public, but also the support of the BART police from time-to-time," he wrote in response to the initiative of the ILWU. "Union dues should be spent fighting layoffs, and improving working conditions."

To counter such arguments, speakers representing the ILWU at the rally pointed to the labor battles on San Francisco's waterfront in 1934 that led to the birth of the ILWU. After cops opened fire on striking workers then, killing two longshoremen and wounding 109 others, workers organized the historic San Francisco general strike.

Class-conscious workers participating in the discussions pointed to more recent labor battles to explain that police are used to break strikes, to herd scabs through picket lines, and to protect the interests and the property of the employers. This has been the experience of striking French workers in recent weeks, where riot police are clearing fuel depots blockaded by the workers. The cops are acting in tandem with judges handing down injunctions and ordering prison terms for workers who refuse to return to work.

In a press interview Trent Willis, former president of Local 10, spoke about the systematic harassment and terrorizing by cops of working-class communities where the majority of Blacks and Latinos live. Willis pointed out that he, like many ILWU members who are Black, knows what it is like to be pulled over by police for no reason.

Another debated issue was whether to support the demand, raised by Oscar Grant's family and others, for a maximum sentence of 14 years for Johannes Mehserle, the cop who shot Grant. Mehserle was convicted of involuntary manslaughter, a charge that carries a sentence of 2 to 4 years. A 14-year sentence would have meant tacking on a "gun enhancement" penalty, one of the laws passed as part of the "war on crime" that adds a significant number of years to sentences if a gun is used.

Gun enhancement laws have contributed to the huge increase in the prison population in recent decades. Needless to say, they are applied in a discriminatory way against working people, particularly against Blacks. Anything done by workers to legitimize use of such laws only helps strengthen a precedent that is ultimately aimed against the working class. These laws should be abolished, not strengthened through a progressive veneer of being used against police who brutalize working people.

A similar question was posed after Mehserle was arrested, when a demonstration was organized to protest his release on bail. The right to bail, under the eighth amendment to the constitution, is a protection against the repressive apparatus of the state. If we demand this right be taken away from our enemies, given the nature of the capitalist courts, it can only serve to strengthen the standard of denying bail to workers, and working-class fighters.

Police brutality is inherent in the capitalist system. Only when we replace the tiny minority of wealthy families who rule in the interests of their own profits will we be able to rid society of this scourge. Along the road to taking power out of their hands, we need to strengthen the unions and fight to build a labor party, independent of—and against—the Democratic and Republican parties, who represent the capitalist oppressors.

As the economic crisis and attacks on the labor movement and the entire working class continue to unfold, there will be more resistance, including strikes, and opportunities for unionists to unite with others in common action against police brutality. A new generation of workers will come to understand from their own class-struggle experiences the truth of the slogan raised on a large banner at the ILWU rally, "An injury to one is an injury to all."

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Workers Fight against Impact of Economic Crisis in Southern Africa.** Speaker: Annalucia Vermont, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 19, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 waged, \$2 unwaged. 4/125 Grafton Rd. Tel.: (09) 369-1223.

### UNITED KINGDOM

#### London

**China: A Centre Stage of Class Struggle in the 21st Century.** Fri., Nov. 19, 7:30 p.m. First floor, 12- Bethnal Green Rd. (entrance on Brick Lane). Tel.: (020) 7613-2466.

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**Communist Workers Movement Versus Pan-Africanist Socialism.** Speaker: Eric

Simpson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 19, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

### ILLINOIS

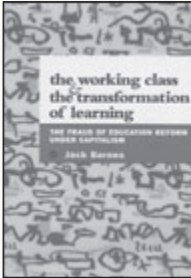
#### Chicago

**Washington's Latest Offensive in the Afghan War: Bring the Troops Home Now!** Speaker: Betsy Farley, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 19, 8 p.m. 3557 S. Archer Ave. Tel.: (773) 890-1190.

### NEW YORK

#### Manhattan

**Europe and America: Rulers Drive Through Austerity—Which Way Forward for the Working Class?** Fri., Nov. 19, 8 p.m. Suggested donation: \$5. 306 W. 37th St, 10th Fl., (use elevators on 37th St. side). Tel.: (212) 736-2540.



### The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

By Jack Barnes  
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# Pathfinder to take part in Venezuela book fair

BY MAGGIE TROWE

The sixth annual Venezuela International Book Fair will take place in Caracas, the nation’s capital, November 12–21.

Pathfinder Press will have a stand as it has every year since the first book fair in 2005. Pathfinder is featuring two new books this year—*Lenin’s Final Fight* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. The publisher will present a panel discussion launching the latter, which will include representatives from Pathfinder and others.

Every year tens of thousands of people attend this popular, open-air cultural event, where more than 120 publishers from Venezuela and beyond exhibit and sell their books, and where dozens of workshops, panels, film showings, poetry readings, and musical concerts take place daily.

From 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. the book fair is open, free of charge, to the public. This year the event takes place in Francisco de Miranda Park, located in the eastern part of the city not far from the large workers district of Petaré.

## ‘Workers Power’ book sales

Continued from front page

the working class. Many picked up the book and a subscription after talking to socialist workers on the job. “Communist workers at a bakery in East London report selling nine *Militant* subscriptions and five *Workers Power* books to coworkers during the drive,” wrote Olöf Andra Proppé.

Francisco Cambero, who works at a pharmaceutical plant in New York, followed up on a number of discussions he had with coworkers about socialist politics during the fall election campaigns. On the last two days of the drive he picked up three subscriptions and sold five copies of the *Workers Power* book. Twenty-nine workers subscribed to the

*Militant*, and 33 copies of the book were sold, at two factories where members of the Socialist Workers Party work in the New York area.

While not every area made its goals, and the international drive came up short, there was a steady campaign over eight weeks to reach out to workers, farmers, young people, and individuals involved in political activity. Socialist campaigners joined picket lines in Iowa; demonstrations against government austerity measures in France and the United Kingdom; rallies for jobs in Washington, D.C.; protests against police brutality in California; actions for abortion rights in Australia; and many other activities in regions around the world. Everywhere

there was interest and eagerness to discuss why a socialist revolution is necessary and possible.

A real spirit developed over the last couple of weeks of the drive, as areas organized to make and go over their quotas.

“We sold 29 *Workers Power* books since last week,” wrote Becca Williamson from Des Moines.

“This was our best week yet—15 books and 15 subscriptions,” wrote Joe Young from Montreal.

While the fall campaign is over, the effort to go out and talk to workers and youth about politics, the working class struggle, and the fight for a socialist revolution, is ongoing.

Shortly after the final scoreboard was put together, Paul Davies from London wrote, “Socialist workers from here and Edinburgh joined tens of thousands of students on a demonstration in London against education cuts. Five books and five subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold.”

“Socialist Workers from Des Moines and Chicago will be going to Keokuk, Iowa, for a solidarity march for the workers locked out at Roquette this weekend,” wrote Alyson Kennedy. “Here in Chicago, we’ll also be starting up a plant-gate sale with the *Militant* at a meatpacking plant where workers are involved in a union-organizing drive.”

### Iowa workers seek solidarity against lockout



Militant/Laura Anderson

CHICAGO—Buddy Howard (left), one of the unionists locked out by Roquette America, Inc. in Keokuk, Iowa, spoke to the Militant Labor Forum in Chicago November 6. On the panel along with Howard were Alyson Kennedy (center), the 2010 SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Illinois, and Dave Prince, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party.

The 240 members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 48G were locked out after rejecting a union-busting contract proposal September 28. “We set up picket lines right away,” Howard explained. “Hundreds of unionists from plants in the area joined us for a solidarity march down Main Street because they know they are next.”

Another solidarity action is scheduled for November 13, Howard reported. “Our struggle gets stronger every day and we’re learning as we go,” he said. Messages of support can be sent to: BCTGM Local 48G, 301 Blondeau Street, Keokuk, Iowa 52632, or e-mailed to bctgm48g@qwestoffice.net. Phone: (319) 524-1249; Fax: (319) 524-1751.

—BETSY FARLEY

## Party-building fund relies on donations from working people

BY LAURA GARZA

As election season ends newspapers are tallying up the amount of money the capitalist parties raised and spent, with donations in the millions from wealthy business owners throughout the country. The ongoing work of the Socialist Workers Party, on the other hand, relies on donations from workers, farmers, and youth who want to see the working-class movement grow.

The fall party-building fund is in the final week of the drive, and is ahead of schedule with 93 percent of pledges collected. Omari Musa, fund director from Washington, D.C., reports they are busy collecting all of the pledges to make their quota on time. Socialists in D.C. combined regular calls and discussions with contributors with a broad effort to win new pledges from those buying the *Militant* and getting interested in the socialist candidates running in the local elections.

Among the contributors in Washington are workers who paid several hundred dollars, as well as those who pitched in \$10 or \$20. One worker paid \$20 for a single copy of the *Militant*, saying “keep the rest for your movement.” A rail worker made a \$20 contribution, and a worker originally from Ecuador who campaigned for the Socialist Workers Party candidates gave \$10. This worker brought several family members to an event to raise funds for the party where his son also gave \$20. A student at the University of Maryland, who is originally from Bolivia, contributed \$20.

In Minnesota, several contribu-

tions came from people donating for the first time, including two readers of the *Militant* in Austin, Minnesota, and another worker who occasionally attends Militant Labor Forums.

In Boston, a child-care worker originally from Peru contributed \$20, and a student contributing for the first time gave \$200.

All these contributions make the work of the party possible. Contributions received in the mail by Monday, November 15, will be recorded on the final scoreboard printed in next week’s issue.

### Party-building fund Sept. 11–Nov. 9

City	Quota	Paid	%
Twin Cities*	\$7,500	\$7,630	102%
Des Moines*	\$3,000	\$3,019	101%
Seattle	\$8,600	\$8,616	100%
Los Angeles	\$8,000	\$7,918	99%
Miami	\$3,000	\$2,854	95%
New York	\$20,000	\$18,722	94%
Houston	\$3,000	\$2,805	94%
Philadelphia	\$3,600	\$3,276	91%
Atlanta	\$7,800	\$6,818	87%
San Francisco	\$13,500	\$11,770	87%
Chicago	\$10,000	\$8,385	84%
Boston*	\$3,800	\$3,045	80%
Washington*	\$8,000	\$6,154	77%
Other		600	
TOTAL	\$99,800	\$91,612	93%
SHOULD BE	\$98,000	\$85,750	88%
* Raised quota			

campaign to sell ‘Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power’ & ‘Militant’ Sept. 11–Nov. 9 Final chart							
Country	‘Workers Power’ books			‘Militant’ subscriptions			
	quota	sold	%	quota	sold	%	
UNITED STATES							
Miami*	60	69	115%	70	81	116%	
Boston*	58	65	112%	70	72	103%	
Chicago	130	136	105%	130	133	102%	
Washington	145	151	104%	125	141	113%	
New York	375	385	103%	325	360	111%	
Atlanta	120	122	102%	150	150	100%	
Seattle	130	131	101%	140	153	109%	
Des Moines	110	110	100%	125	135	108%	
Philadelphia	65	65	100%	75	77	103%	
Houston	50	37	74%	50	55	110%	
San Francisco	130	93	72%	155	114	74%	
Twin Cities	100	62	62%	135	97	72%	
Los Angeles	135	72	53%	120	92	77%	
Total U.S.	1608	1498	93%	1670	1660	99%	
UNITED KINGDOM							
London*	110	111	101%	105	110	105%	
Edinburgh	25	20	80%	35	35	100%	
Total UK	135	131	97%	140	145	104%	
Canada	62	73	118%	70	78	111%	
New Zealand*	30	31	103%	65	68	105%	
Australia	25	26	104%	55	57	104%	
Sweden	18	17	94%	22	24	109%	
Total	1878	1776	99%	2022	2032	97%	
Should be	1800	1800	100%	2100	2100	100%	
* Raised both quotas							



## ON THE PICKET LINE

### New Zealand unions rally against antilabor legislation

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Some 22,000 union members in cities and towns throughout New Zealand took off work October 20 to take part in more than two dozen rallies called by the Council of Trade Unions to protest proposed antiworker bills in parliament.

The National Party-led government's proposed legislation would give increased powers to employers. These include the right to fire a worker any time during the first 90 days of employment without reason, the right to demand that a worker provide a doctor's certificate for just a single day off sick, and the right to deny access to workplaces by union representatives.

Another measure would allow bosses to change the dates of public holidays and to substitute cash for vacations.

In another attack on labor here, the government rushed legislation through parliament October 28 declaring all workers engaged in film production to be private contractors. This denies them rights as employees under employment laws and removes the right to negotiate collective contracts.

The measure was passed amidst a wave of antiunion hysteria whipped up by movie industry employers, politicians, and media commentators, threatening that Warner Brothers

would move production of its upcoming movie *The Hobbit* from New Zealand unless curbs on the unions were guaranteed.

Movie executives and government ministers met for several days negotiating the deal, which also includes almost NZ\$100 million in tax concessions and donations to the film company.

—Mike Tucker

### Dallas: DISH Network workers fight for union contract

Members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) rallied November 4 at two DISH Network locations near Dallas to back workers fighting for a union contract.

Last February workers at the Farmers Branch and North Richland Hills worksites voted to be represented by the CWA. The election at Farmers Branch was certified by the National Labor Relations Board in May, but the company has been stalling on signing a contract there.

Workers at North Richland Hills are still waiting for their vote to be officially certified.

Since the vote DISH has been "cutting workers' hours while shifting work to contractors and refusing to fill jobs when workers have been fired or quit," according to the CWA website.

—Brian Williams

### France: Actions oppose retirement age hike



Militant/Claude Bleton

PARIS—Hundreds of thousands of workers marched across France November 6, demanding that President Nicolas Sarkozy not sign the bill recently adopted by parliament to raise the retirement age by two years. Above, a contingent of Grandpuits refinery workers demonstrate in Paris. Workers at Grandpuits have been on strike for three weeks. Their banner reads: "Thank you for your support of the refinery workers."

—DEREK JEFFERS

## Workers fight for union at Jimmy John's

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

MINNEAPOLIS—The Jimmy John's Workers Union has filed an objection to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), demanding that it nullify the October 22 union representation election. In a widely watched vote—both here and nationally—the union narrowly lost, with 85 workers voting for and 87 against.

The unionization drive at Jimmy John's is one of the few national attempts to organize fast-food workers. It received broad solidarity among working people in the Twin Cities.

The objection filed with the NLRB outlines a pattern of labor rights violations, from firing of pro-union workers and bribe offers to threats of closing shops if workers voted for the union.

The Jimmy John's Workers Union is affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World. Leading up to the vote, some 60 percent of Jimmy John's workers signed cards asking for a union vote.

The union campaign centered on organizing sandwich workers, meat cutters, and delivery workers at 10 Jimmy John's sandwich shops in Minneapolis and St. Louis Park. The shops advertise mottos like "The Customer Is Usually Right" and "Subs So Fast You'll Freak," while their Web site says, "Jimmy John's offers awesome opportunities for growth and adventure."

Union workers counter with their own motto: "Wages So Low You'll Freak." This popular slogan is worn on T-shirts by many supporters of the union's fight.

David Boehnke, a sandwich maker at Jimmy John's for almost two years, told the *Militant* the main issues that motivated workers to seek out the union included "low wages, working erratic hours, sent home after

short shifts, no paid sick days, and no medical benefits." The workers are paid the minimum wage of \$7.25 or slightly above.

In response to the union's organizing effort, franchise owner Mike Mulligan, hired an antilabor outfit—Labor Relations Services, Inc.—spending, more than \$84,500 on an antiunion campaign, according to the Department of Labor.

Mulligan has led a red-baiting attack on the union, which he says is a "socialist-anarchist organization" that "proudly preaches the overthrow of capitalism."

Boehnke said the union organizing drive "appeared on people's radar screens and captured the imagina-

tion of lots of people. They identified with our union's demands." In reaching out for support, members of the Jimmy John's Workers Union spoke at union meetings and received endorsement and financial help from several unions in the Twin Cities area. They included the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO; Local 1189 (formerly 789) of the United Food and Commercial Workers; Service Employees International Union Local 26; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3800; and United Auto Workers Local 879.

Organizers of the union say they will continue to press their fight to build the union.

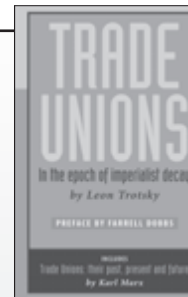
### Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

by Leon Trotsky

Also includes: "Trade Unions: Their Past, Present and Future" by Karl Marx

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## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 22, 1985

NEWARK—"I finally made it," Rubin "Hurricane" Carter told John Artis, after U.S. District Court Judge H. Lee Sarokin released Carter from custody November 8. Artis was his codefendant in the triple murder frame-up 19 years ago.

The decision to release the former number one middleweight boxing contender took place after the judge, in a 70-page ruling, overturned the 1976 conviction of Carter and Artis.

Sarokin said that original 1967 trial and the 1976 retrial convictions were based "upon an appeal to racism rather than reason and concealment rather than disclosure," and that "the jury was permitted to draw inferences of guilt based solely upon the race" of the defendants.

Carter and Artis had steadfastly maintained their innocence and called the case what it was, a frame-up.



November 21, 1960

Nov. 16—While Democrats and Republicans continued to insist that the crisis facing humanity today centers in Moscow and Havana, the rest of the world had its eyes centered on the crisis that blazed up in New Orleans when four small Negro girls entered first grade in two previously all-white schools.

By today the mobs had grown to an estimated 5,000 and they were becoming more and more belligerent as state officials covertly encouraged them to violent action.

Washington observers today said they consider it the worst crisis in "federal-state relations" since federal troops were sent into Little Rock in 1957 to enforce token school segregation like that now being attempted in New Orleans.



November 23, 1935

Britain's great show of defending the national rights of the Ethiopian people is not making such a hit since Britain's own national problem burst forth last week in Wafdist (nationalist) riots in Egypt. At the very moment when Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Foreign Secretary, is oozing righteous sympathy for the poor Ethiopians, and calling for a vastly enlarged navy, for the purposes of defending Ethiopia no doubt, six Egyptians are killed and more than a hundred wounded in riots of resentment against a speech on the Egyptian question by Sir Samuel Hoare.

Egypt stands to Britain much as our own Philippines stand to the United States.

The riots are significant in a larger sense as an indication of the colonial unrest stimulated by the Ethiopian war.



# Philadelphia cops face ‘stop and frisk’ lawsuit

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA—On November 4 a lawsuit was filed in federal court here charging the Philadelphia cops with tens of thousands of unconstitutional “stop and frisk” operations, aimed particularly at Blacks and Latinos.

“These unconstitutional actions have had and continue to have a devastating effect on the lives of many Philadelphians,” said Paul Messing, one of the attorneys who filed the suit. They “subject innocent people to humiliating and degrading treatment.”

Using the cops’ own statistics, the lawsuit states that in 2009 there were 253,333 “stop and frisk” operations, an increase of 148 percent since 2005. Of these, 72 percent targeted African Americans. Philadelphia is 44 percent Black. Only 8 percent of the stops, according to police figures, resulted in arrests.

“Most of those arrests had nothing to do with the reason they were stopped,” Messing said. “The charges were often for disorderly conduct because they complained they were stopped for no reason.”

The lawsuit was filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, attorneys from the well-known civil liberties firm of Kairys, Rudovsky, Messing & Feinberg, as well as a law professor from the University of Pennsylvania.

Plaintiffs include eight Black and Latino men subjected to unwarranted stops and searches. The class-action lawsuit seeks to represent tens of thousands of others who have been mistreated this way but were not in a position to sue for themselves. This would open the door to a blanket injunction against the cops, in addition to money damages.

Philadelphia cops have a long history of racist, anti-working-class attacks and systematic violations of constitutional rights. In 1995, in what became known as the 39th District scandal, a large-scale operation run by a gang of cops in North Philadelphia, a largely Black area, was exposed. That led to the revelation of hundreds of instances of “beating, robbing, lying and planting phony evidence,” reported the *New York Times*. The revelations led to the reopening of hundreds of frame-up convictions with many being thrown out, and forced the city to pay more than \$6 million to victims. The widespread publicity pushed back the cops’ ability to ride roughshod over working-class areas in the city.

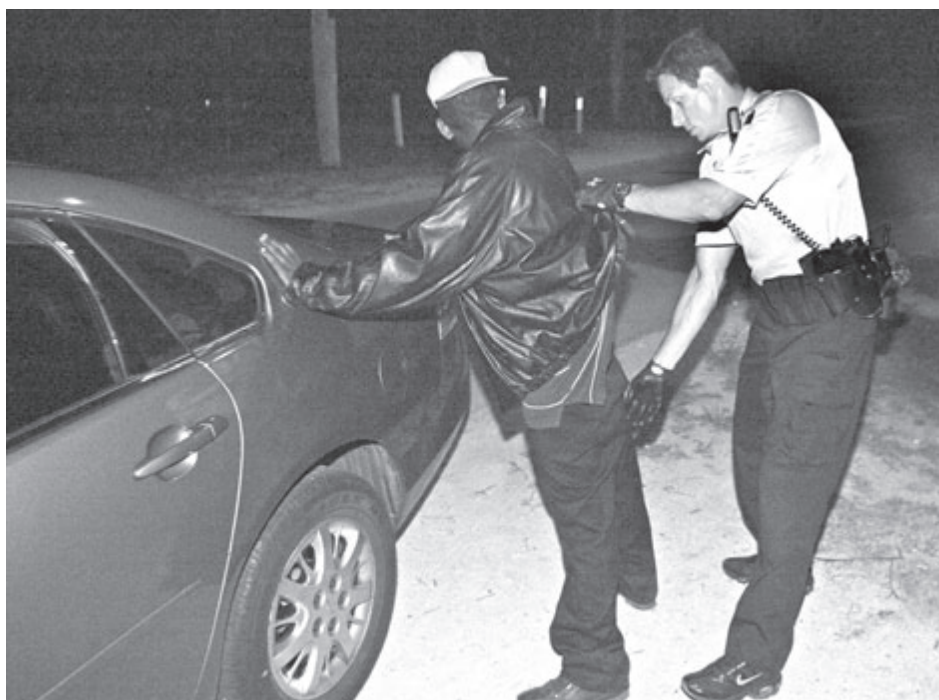
In 1996, on the heels of these expo-

sure, the city and the cops were sued for systematically targeting Blacks and Latinos and found guilty. That suit was won by some of the same lawyers bringing the legal challenge filed this week.

As part of the settlement, the city had to maintain and turn over to the lawyers who prosecuted them records of cop stops and their results. David Rudovsky, an attorney both in the 1996 case and the one filed this week, said that these reports enabled them to focus public attention on the fact that the cops continued to arbitrarily stop and search people, particularly in Black and Latino areas.

Michael Nutter, elected Philadelphia mayor in 2008, brought in a new police chief, Charles Ramsey, and together they initiated a new, expanded “stop, question and frisk” program. The November 4 lawsuit is against Ramsey, the city, and a number of city cops.

The suit cites the specific experiences of eight people who were unconstitutionally stopped and harassed by the cops, including a garment worker, a pharmaceutical worker, a carpenter, a



AP Photo/Reinhold Matay

**Cops are facing lawsuits for “stop and frisk” operations in Philadelphia, New York, and other cities. The majority of those targeted in these arbitrary searches are Black or Latino.**

city worker, a lawyer, an ethnographer from the University of Pennsylvania, and a state representative.

The specific instances include both cases of unwarranted stops, physical abuse, being thrown into and held in squad cars, and other harassment, as well as victimization for speaking up to protest assaults against others.

Similar lawsuits are being prosecuted in other cities including New York. In an October 29 column in the *New York Times*, Bob Herbert said that New York cops “are encouraged to trample on the rights of black and Hispanic New Yorkers by relentlessly enforcing the city’s degrading, unlawful and outright racist stop-and-frisk policy.”

## Gov’t secrecy grows with ‘transparency’

**Continued from front page**

secretive and snooping in recent decades.

Under the pretext of fighting terrorism, the White House is seeking to overhaul the 1994 Communications Assistance to Law Enforcement Act to ensure that phones and networks of cellular and broadband carriers like AT&T, Verizon, and Comcast can be wiretapped as upgrades are introduced. The government also plans to bring Internet companies that enable communications like Gmail, Facebook, Blackberry, and Skype under the law’s mandate for the first time.

Last month the Pentagon announced a program called Anomaly Detection at Multiple Scales that would scan billions of e-mails for “anomalies” in behavior.

The Obama administration backs an expanded program of surveillance by the National Security Agency in which the legal dressing of official warrants or court approvals are no longer required. Established under the George W. Bush administration, the measure provided the White House with “virtually unchecked power to conduct dragnet collection of Americans’ international e-mails and telephone calls without a warrant or suspicion of any kind,” stated an ACLU news release.

### Information requests rejected

The president presented himself an advocate of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) on his first day in office, saying it “encourages accountability through transparency” and is a “commitment to ensuring an open government.”

But more FOIA requests were rejected in the first year of Obama’s presidency than the year before. According to an AP review, 17 federal agencies rejected releasing government documents more than 466,000 times in fiscal year 2009, compared to 312,000 in 2008.

Most documents that were not released detail internal government decision-making. In 2009 exemptions from disclosure for these kinds of records were used more than 70,000 times, up from 47,400 during President George

W. Bush’s final budget year.

A federal appeals court upheld the administration’s invocation of “state secrets” privilege and threw out a lawsuit brought by the ACLU against a Boeing subsidiary for the company’s part in the U.S. government’s “extraordinary renditions” program. The suit was filed on behalf of five individuals who say they were tortured overseas under the program.

The government has also stonewalled the release of FOIA requests related to business secrets. Bloomberg News has tried since January 2009 to get information from the Department of the Treas-

ury about \$301 billion of securities owned by Citigroup that the government guarantees.

Further facts have come to light about government spying on “social networking” Web sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and Flickr. A lawsuit filed by the Electronic Frontier Foundation against half a dozen federal agencies forced the government to release a document about its “Social Networking Monitoring Center” run by the Department of Homeland Security. It was set up at the time of Obama’s inauguration to spy on those applying for citizenship.

## Canadian citizen sentenced in Guantánamo military tribunal

BY ANNETTE KOURI

MONTREAL—Omar Khadr, a prisoner at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, pleaded guilty to what the U.S. government calls terrorism-related charges. Khadr was 15 years old when he was shot and captured in Afghanistan more than eight years ago.

Khadr was convicted and sentenced by a military commission in which the judge and “jury” are military personnel appointed by the Pentagon. The prosecution can use hearsay and secret evidence. In the tribunal, government prosecutors can use statements obtained through beatings, threats, and forms of torture as “evidence.” Defendants are also denied the right to see and challenge secret evidence used against them.

Until now Khadr had maintained his innocence and contested the court procedures and conditions at Guantánamo. His guilty plea spared him a likely possibility of life in prison. He was sentenced to 40 years, but as part of a pre-arranged plea bargain he will serve one more year in Guantánamo and then be sent to Canada for a possible seven more years in prison.

Khadr is a Canadian citizen and the Canadian government has joined in the abrogation of Khadr’s civil rights

since he was taken into U.S. custody. In 2003 Canadian intelligence interrogated Khadr at Guantánamo under conditions of extreme sleep deprivation. In January 2010 the Supreme Court of Canada recognized this as a violation of Khadr’s human rights. In its ruling the court agreed with lower Canadian courts that the Canadian government should request Khadr be repatriated. The decision, however, clearly stated that it was a recommendation to the Canadian government, not a demand.

Even Canada’s leading big-business newspaper, the *Globe and Mail*, commented recently on “the wrongful prosecution of Omar Khadr” and Canada’s role in that prosecution. “Forty-eight years for terrorism offences committed in those circumstances at age 15—the military-justice system is blind to any notion of a different moral standard for young people,” the paper said.

“And what role did Canada play?” the editorial continued. “Shamefully, it sent its official to bully him into giving out incriminating information that it then handed to his prosecutors, an act the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously condemned. The Canadian government then declared, ‘Let the process work.’ Some process.”

**Workers’ Rights Versus the Secret Police**  
by Larry Seigle

How, since the inception of the modern revolutionary workers movement in 1848, the ruling classes have responded with police spies, agents provocateurs, and political frame-ups. **\$5**

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Describes the decades-long covert counterintelligence program against socialists and activists in the Black and anti-Vietnam War movements. **\$15**

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# Cuban gov't policies aim to strengthen economy

BY SETH GALINSKY

Cuban president Raúl Castro participated in an expanded meeting of the island's trade union leadership October 30–31 to discuss recent government decisions aimed at alleviating the country's economic difficulties and maintaining workers power.

New economic measures focus on increasing the productivity of labor, reducing dependence on imports, especially of food, and cutting waste and inefficiency. Changes include a substantial reduction of government employees, greater emphasis on agricultural production, and relaxed rules on self-employment.

Reports in the capitalist media—through a combination of ignorance, wishful thinking, and deliberate misrepresentation—have portrayed the measures as proof that Cuba is beginning to head toward capitalist restoration. At the same time these articles often lament the strict limits and measured approach to the changes.

In an August 1 speech to Cuba's National Assembly, Castro noted that these news agencies and “self-styled ‘analysts’ twist our reality.” They are mistaken, he said, if they think that the Cuban government is applying “capitalist recipes.”

“If they were praising us, then we would have reason to be worried,” Castro added.

At the heart of the measures is “reducing the greatly bloated staff in the state sector,” he said. “We have to erase forever the idea that Cuba is the only country in the world where you can live without working.”

In laying out the new measures and their importance, Castro reminded the Union of Young Communists (UJC) congress in April that Cuba suffered a 35 percent drop in its gross domestic product and an 85 percent cut in its foreign trade in the early 1990s as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. In addition, Washington's 50-year draconian embargo against Cuba aimed at undermining the revolution remains harsh as ever. The worldwide capitalist economic crisis has exacerbated the challenges and difficulties facing the revolution.

“Without a sound and dynamic economy and without eliminating superfluous expenses and waste, it will not be

possible to raise the living standard of the population nor preserve and improve the high levels of education and health care guaranteed to every citizen free of charge,” Castro told the UJC.

## Need for efficient agriculture

“Without an efficient and robust agriculture that we can develop with the resources available to us,” he added, “we can't hope to maintain and increase the amount of food for the population instead of depending so much on importing products that could be grown in Cuba.”

On September 13 the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) announced that the government by mid-2011 planned to reduce the workforce at government ministries and state-owned enterprises by 500,000.

This restructuring is a key part of an effort to “increase production and the quality of services, reduce exaggerated social expenses, and eliminate improper giveaways” and excessive subsidies, the CTC said.

At the CTC leadership meeting the Cuban president noted that currently there are more workers in service jobs than in the production of goods and this must be reversed.

In an interview published November 3 in the South African Communist Party's monthly journal, *Umsebenzi*, Oscar Martínez, deputy head of the International Relations Department of the Communist Party of Cuba, said, “We are giving people land and helping them to make productive use of it.”

“We are not putting people out on the street,” Martínez said. “We are directing them to other areas of work vital for the economy, mainly food production.”

Opportunities for self-employment are also being expanded. The most popular license request under new regulations has been for food preparation and sales. The government expects the number of self-employed and small businesses to expand from the current 144,000 to 250,000, expanding the amount of taxes paid to the state.



Karen Karlsson

Urban farm in Havana, February 2010. “Without an efficient and robust agriculture that we can develop with the resources available to us,” Cuban president Raúl Castro told communist youth congress in April, “we can't hope to maintain and increase the amount of food for the population instead of depending so much on importing products.”

“To be able to defend the measures and explain them, the working class has to be knowledgeable and convinced of their importance for the preservation of the revolution, otherwise we'll go over the cliff,” said *Granma*, summarizing Castro's remarks to the CTC.

The only way to break with dogmas, bad habits, and taboos, Castro said, is with the working class leading the process, together with peasants and the rest of the people.

According to *Trabajadores*, nearly 60,000 workplace assemblies had already taken place by mid-October, out of 85,000 planned to discuss the measures and consider proposals by workers on how they should be carried out.

According to *Juventud Rebelde*, workers and union representatives at each workplace are involved in deciding which workers remain and which are released for other employment.

## ‘Skeptics thought it couldn't be done’

Ulises Rosales del Toro, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Cuba, said in early October that some 100,000 Cubans have recently started working in agriculture when “some skeptics thought it couldn't be done,” reported *Juventud Rebelde*. Among the new farmers are 30,000 young people. In July 2008 the Cuban National Assembly passed a law making it possible for Cubans to apply to

farm idle lands.

“A total of 57 Cuban municipalities have joined the effort to increase food production through the Suburban Agriculture Program,” *Juventud Rebelde* reported October 5. The program promotes agriculture and livestock production on the outskirts of towns and cities.

In the nine months since it began, some 150,000 acres have been cleared for planting or grazing. The goal is to extend the program to 156 of the island's 169 municipalities by the beginning of next year.

These efforts build on the already existing urban agriculture program. A September 22 article in *Bohemia* notes that in Havana, Cuba's capital, there are 91 agricultural cooperatives, 418 vegetable gardens, 179 urban farms, 5,661 small parcels, 28 nurseries, and 80,000 courtyards with fruits or vegetables.

The Cuban press has published many articles on the need to overcome some of the obstacles to increasing agricultural and industrial production, such as bureaucratic methods and poor planning.

Victor Gaute, a member of the Communist Party's Central Committee secretariat, told a September union convention of transportation and port workers, “What we need is for workers to really feel that they are the owners of their resources. Real owners ask themselves every day, with what I have, what more can I do or how can I do it better?”

# ‘Cuba in Revolution’ photo exhibit in N.Y.

BY ARNOLD WEISSBERG

NEW YORK—Those who live in or are traveling through this city have an opportunity to see a unique photo exhibition called “Cuba in Revolution” at the International Center of Photography.

The pictures in the show were taken from the 1940s through 1968 and include many by three great Cuban photographers of that era: Luís Korda, Raúl Corrales, and Osvaldo Salas. The show features work from more than 30 photographers.

Viewers will get a good idea of what the people who made the Cuban Revolution looked like, and many of the things they did before, during, and after the revolution's triumph in January 1959.

The first section of the exhibition, “Pre-Revolutionary Havana, 1945–57,” displays 16 shots made by freelance photographer Constantino Arias. We see rich Americans and Cubans in the hotels, a woman in a fur stole, a woman sleeping on the street, and student demonstrators under attack by the police.

In this group also is the photograph of Fidel Castro and other members of the July 26th Movement leaving the Moncada prison in 1955, having been freed through a broad public protest campaign.

There are photographs from the guerrilla war in the mountains, showing Fidel, Che Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos, and other revolutionary leaders and soldiers; photographs of the first days of the revolutionary victory, including Ernesto Fernández's photo of “Liberation Day, the Urban Militia Take Control”; and many more. There are photos from a week later by American photographer Burt Glinn snapping Fidel, Che, and Camilo all holding rifles, entering Havana on a tank. Dominating that shot is Afro-Cuban Comandante Félix Lugones Ramírez holding a rifle in his right hand and two grenades prominent on his chest.

The influence of the Cuban Revolution beyond the island is also the subject of a section of the show. One of the most interesting photos here is from New

York City showing the cops attacking Blacks welcoming Fidel to Harlem and the Hotel Theresa in 1960.

What comes through this photo exhibit is the ordinariness of most of the subjects of these photographs, in the most un-ordinary of moments, making a revolution and defending it, and in the process changing who they themselves were.

Especially striking are the many photographs of peasants—on horseback, armed, or massed in the Plaza of the Revolution. Corrales's “Sombreritos” (Little Sombreros) gives a sense of the discipline and numbers of the mobilized peasantry. Flip Schulke catches peasants with their straw hats and machetes gathering in the Plaza of the Revolution in Havana on July 26, 1959, celebrating the revolution and the first agrarian reform law, which distributed land to peasants.

The exhibit runs through January 9, 2011, and is located at the International Center of Photography Museum, 1133 Avenue of the Americas at 43rd Street in Manhattan.

## New International no. 10

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by Jack Barnes

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# Indonesia: Tsunami toll bares social inequalities

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—The death and injury toll exacted in Indonesia by a tsunami off the Sumatran coast and a series of volcanic eruptions in Central Java have laid bare the social inequalities and underdevelopment that confront working people there.

Home to 235 million people, Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous country. The sale of agricultural commodities and exports of minerals have made a layer of capitalists and landlords very rich, but the millions of workers, peasants, and small producers who create these goods generally live in conditions of grinding poverty.

Sixty-five years after winning independence, Indonesia remains a semicolonial country indebted to and dominated by the billionaire rulers of the United States, Japan, Australia, and other imperialist powers. In response to the twin disasters that started in October, pledges of aid from these governments have amounted to a few million dollars.

The legacy of this class exploitation and inequality includes the flimsy buildings, lack of roads and vehicles, and woefully inadequate emergency responses that have exposed fishing and farming communities to the full force of the destructive power of nature.

## Earthquake and tsunami

The tsunami unleashed by the earthquake that struck off the west coast of Sumatra on the morning of October 25 spent much of its fury on the nearby Mentawai islands. While some people escaped to higher and safer ground, others were left at the mercy of waves, some of which were 10 feet high.

According to officials, some 445 people were killed in the wave and its aftermath—more than half of them on North Pagai Island. “Officials said hundreds of wooden and bamboo homes had been washed away in more than 20 villages, displacing more than 20,000 people,” reported the November 1 *Guardian*. Thousands have been left without shelter or food while food and other supplies pile up in other islands.

Some of the 15,000 people made homeless by the tsunami had been “surviving on yams and bananas,” said Demas Sakerebau, a village chief on North Pagai Island, according to the November 2 *Telegraph* newspaper.

Indonesian officials had admitted

that “only a fraction [of] the food, water, tents, medicine and blankets that have reached nearby ports have been distributed to survivors,” reported the British-based paper.

The government, said the *Telegraph*, blamed “bad weather and a lack of boats and helicopters”—the only effective means of transport in an area without regular air links with Sumatra. Boats are the main form of transport among and to the islands. Roads are often little more than tracks used by companies that log the tropical forests, often employing workers from Sumatra.

Many of the native peoples survive through subsistence farming and fishing. Others earn some cash supplying services and goods to the growing numbers of surfers and other tourists.

## Warning system

Claims and counterclaims have surrounded the emergency tsunami warning system constructed after the massive earthquake and tsunami of December 26, 2004. Of the 225,000 or more people in 14 nations who died in that disaster, more than half were in Aceh and other parts of northern Sumatra.

The German-based manufacturers of the system denied claims by at least one Indonesian official that buoys designed to sense the passing tsunami had failed. While Sumatra was alerted in time, they said, the Mentawai islands were too close to the earthquake's center to allow time for useful warnings.

On November 1 the *Guardian* stated that “financial constraints” had placed limits on the warning system from the start. Citing a German scientist working with the Indonesian government, the UK-based newspaper said that “the early warning system covered only larger areas of population.” The Mentawai



Reuters/Crack Palinggi

**Residents with aid supplies in Malakopa, one of islands worst hit by tsunami in Indonesia. Hundreds were killed in country's most remote and undeveloped areas. Lack of warning system left workers unprepared and most supplies failed to reach where they were most needed.**

islands are home to 35,000 people.

“Indonesia could only afford to install 10 of the expensive, hi-tech buoys” used in the system, reported the *Guardian*, noting that “few villages on the islands have electricity and mobile phones are rare, so passing on warnings is difficult.”

One day after the earthquake and 800 miles to the east, in central Java, Mountain Merapi, known as “Fire Mountain,” began a series of violent eruptions that sent rocks, lava, and gas tumbling down the mountain's 9,600-foot slopes.

The mountain has a record of deadly eruptions, including in 1930 when 1,300 people lost their lives. In spite of that, its slopes and surrounding area are populated by farming families and villages. Many were still in harm's way on November 5 when the most violent of the latest series of eruptions occurred, tripling the death toll to well over 100.

Pledges of aid from the imperialist powers have been doled out with an eyedropper. The New Zealand government has supplied US\$354,000, while the Australian government has pledged less than \$1 million. Washington and

the European Union—made up of the continental European imperialist powers—have pledged \$2 million each.

On the eve of a trip to Indonesia and several other nations in Asia, U.S. president Barack Obama had little to say about the tsunami and volcano that have taken more than 550 lives, or about Indonesia's crippling and unpayable foreign debt of \$180 billion, which serves to transfer wealth created by Indonesia's toilers to the imperialist capitals. Japanese-based financial institutions hold 20 percent of this debt; 11.7 percent is held in the United States—a bit less than Singapore, which acts as a clearing house for foreign investors in Asia.

As reported by the November 6 *Washington Post*, Obama had his eyes on profits. Howard Schneider wrote, “In plotting a path to boost U.S. exports, the Obama administration has turned a keen eye to the trillions of dollars Indonesia and other Asian nations plan to spend on power plants, transportation and other infrastructure in coming years, expecting it to boost American makers of heavy equipment and other top companies.”

## ‘Microloans’ bring greater hardship in India

BY CINDY JAQUITH

A wave of suicides in the state of Andhra Pradesh in southeast India has shined a spotlight on the role of microfinance companies that claim to offer a way to lift workers and rural toilers out of poverty through “entrepreneurship.”

Microfinance companies typically lend small amounts of money to women who are denied credit by regular banks. They require no collateral. In India there

are 27 million such borrowers, lured by the prospect of a loan to keep the farm going or to open up a tiny shop.

In addition to charging exorbitant interest, from 25 percent to 100 percent according to the *Wall Street Journal*, many microfinance companies insist on deducting another 10 percent for a mandatory savings account. That money can then be lent to other borrowers.

Most people who receive loans have to start making payments the very next week, giving them no lead time to accumulate enough cash. They often take out another loan from a different microfinance company to be able to make the first loan repayment. Failure to make the payments often results in threatening visits from collectors. In Andhra Pradesh's Vishakapatnam district, a worker's 10-year-old daughter was kidnapped by a microfinance institution for collateral, according to a recent article in the *Deccan Herald*.

The *Financial Times* described the story of Kanakam and Rajiti Ramesh, who farmed on one-quarter of an acre of land and were unable to make ends meet. When a microfinance agent came to their village offering loans to women, Rajiti, already \$450 in debt, borrowed another \$225. According to the terms

she had to repay \$6 every week for a year—a fortune given that most small farmers in India live on less than \$1 a day. Seeing no way out of this debt death trap, Kanakam Ramesh killed himself.

There have been at least 57 suicides in Andhra Pradesh in recent months, many of them people owing money to microfinance outfits that usually charge at least 26 percent to 30 percent interest. Many farmers have simply stopped paying off their loans. Collectors have found themselves unwelcome in many villages. The state government declared a temporary moratorium on debt repayment in October and urged microfinance companies to lower their interest rates and end harassment of debtors.

The biggest microfinance company in India is SKS. “Our purpose is to eradicate poverty,” it says on its Web site. The firm “started out as a small NGO,” the site proudly notes, and today does business with “some of the largest banks and investors,” such as HSBC and Citibank. Advertising a broad range of repackaged debt for investors, the SKS site says, “The poor especially constitute a large market with untapped potential.” In response to the suicides SKS offered to lower its interest rates by 2 percent—to about 24 percent.

## For further reading

### New International no. 12

“Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun”

by Jack Barnes



Today's accelerating global capitalist slump accompanies a continuation of the most far-reaching shift in Washington's military policy and organization since the U.S. buildup toward World War II. Class-struggle-minded working people must face this historic turning point for imperialism, and chart a revolutionary course to confront it.

Also includes:

- ❖ **Their Transformation and Ours**  
Socialist Workers Party Draft Resolution
- ❖ **Crisis, Boom, and Revolution**  
1921 Reports by V.I. Lenin & Leon Trotsky

### New International no. 13

“Our Politics Start with the World”

by Jack Barnes



The huge economic and cultural inequalities between imperialist and semicolonial countries, and among classes within almost every country, are produced and accentuated by the workings of capitalism. For vanguard workers to build parties able to lead a successful revolutionary struggle for power in our own countries, our activity must be guided by a strategy to close this gap.

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by Steve Clark
- ❖ **Capitalism, Labor, and Nature: An Exchange**  
by Richard Levin, Steve Clark

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# 1917: First example of workers taking power

November 7 marks the 93rd anniversary of the Russian Revolution. (October 25 according to the Julian calendar in use in Russia at that time.) On this occasion we're printing excerpts from two speeches by James P. Cannon, a founding leader of the communist movement in the United States who fought to defend the revolution's internationalist and proletarian course advanced by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. Cannon was expelled from the Communist Party in the United States in 1928, along with other veteran leaders who opposed the growing Stalinization of the party and inter-

national movement. He was a founding leader of the Communist League of America in 1929, which evolved into the Socialist Workers Party in 1938.

The first talk was given in 1923 on the fifth year of the Russian Revolution. At the time Cannon had just returned from an eight-month stay in the Soviet Union. The second is from a talk marking the revolution's 25th anniversary in November 1942. Both appear in *Speeches for Socialism*, published by Pathfinder. Copyright © 1969 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## Eyewitness account in 1923

BY JAMES P. CANNON

The story of Soviet Russia for the first four years after the revolution was a story of desperate struggle against tremendous odds. The fight of the Russian workers did not end with their victory over the bourgeoisie within Russia. The capitalist class of the entire world came to the aid of Russian capitalism.

The workers' republic was blockaded and shut off from the world. Counter-revolutionary plots and uprisings inside of Russia were financed and directed from the outside. Mercenary invading armies, backed by world capital, attacked Soviet Russia on all sides. On top of all this came the terrible famine which threatened to deal the final blow.

In those four years Soviet Russia indeed went "through the shadows." But now, after five years of the revolution, we can tell a brighter story. In 1922 Soviet Russia began to emerge from the shadows and started on the upward track. The long and devastating civil war was at an end and the counterrevolution stamped out. The great famine was conquered. The last of the invading foreign armies—except the Japanese in the Far East—had been driven from Russian soil; and the workers' government, freed from the terrible strain and necessity of war, was enabled for the first time to turn its efforts and energies to the great constructive task of building a new Russia on the ruins of the old. . . .

I attended the Fifth All-Russian Trade Union Congress. It is analogous to the national convention of the American Federation of Labor, but it was quite a different-looking delegation than the sleek, fat, overdressed "men of labor" who meet once a year under the chairmanship of [Samuel] Gompers. There were more than a thousand delegates present at this congress; and I saw only one man who appeared to be overweight.

The congress was held in the Moscow Labor Temple, which in the old days was the Nobles' Club. It is a gorgeous place, with marble pillars, crystal chandeliers and gold-leaf decorations. One could imagine that the "Nobles" had many a good time there in the "good old days." But, in the words of the comic-strip artist, "Them days is over." The workers are the ruling class today, and they have taken all the best places for their own purposes.

I saw something at that congress that never yet happened in America. [Gregory] Zinoviev and [Aleksey] Rykov came to the congress to make a report on behalf of the government. I thought how natural it was, in a country ruled by the workers, for the government to report to the trade unions. It is just as natural as it is in America for the government to report to the Chamber of Commerce. The same principle applies. Governments have the habit of reporting to those whom they really represent. The old proverb says, "Tell me whose bread you eat, and I'll tell you whose song you sing."

The Soviet government is a labor government and it makes no secret of the fact that it is partial to the working class. It doesn't pretend to be fair or neutral. They frankly call the government a dictatorship. "It's just like your own government in America," they told me, "only it is a dictatorship of a different class. . . ."

Referring to the fact that wages of the Russian workers had been increased 100 percent during the past year, keeping even pace with the increased production, Zinoviev laid before the congress the program of the Communist Party on the question of wages and production. He said the two must go forward together, hand in hand.

"Every country in the world," he said, "outside of Russia, has built up its indus-



Following Russian Revolution, women at literacy class in Soviet Union in early 1920s.

trial system at the price of an impoverished and exploited working class. The capitalist countries have built a marvelous industrial system; they have erected great structures of steel and stone and cement; they have piled up wealth that staggers calculation. And alongside of all this they have a hungry and impoverished working class which made it all. For all their toil and accomplishments the workers have reaped a harvest of poverty and misery."

"Russia," he said, "must not go that

way. We are a working-class nation and we must not forget that the interest of the workers must be our first concern, always. We will strain all energies to increase production, but here at the beginning let us lay down an iron rule for our future guidance: that every improvement in industry must bring a corresponding improvement in the living standards of the workers in the industry. We want to build a big industry and we want to build it quickly. But we also want to build a bigger and better human race."

## 25th anniversary of Russian Revolution

BY JAMES P. CANNON

Marx and Engels lifted the conception of socialism from utopia to science. The Russian Revolution developed scientific socialism from theory into action, and proved several things that before had been abstract generalizations and predictions. The Russian Revolution proved in action that certain things were true beyond all further doubt. The first of these things proved by the revolution was that it is possible for the workers to take power. It is possible for the workers to forge out of their ranks a party that is capable of leading the struggle to victory. And the workers in all countries will everlastingly remember that. Nothing can erase from history that example. Victory of the proletariat is possible—the Russian Revolution in action, in blood and fire, proved that it is so.

We all know that the authentic leaders of the revolution, Lenin, Trotsky, conceived of it not as an end in itself but as a first step, the first stage, in the world revolution that alone could complete what had been started in the Soviet Union. The conditions objectively were already mature in 1917–1919 for such a world revolution, beginning in Europe. What was lacking was the leadership, the party, without which the workers cannot succeed. The leadership of the old party, the social democrats, who had betrayed the workers under the test of war, supported the bourgeoisie in their counterrevolutionary fight against the workers in the period following the war. The young and hastily organized Communist parties, which had been formed in European countries in response to the example of the Russian Revolution, were as yet too weak and too young, too inexperienced, for their historic task.

Thus the revolution, which objectively had every possibility of succeeding on the whole continent of Europe, failed in the postwar years. The workers today have to pay for that failure, and for

the consequent isolation of the Soviet Union, with another and even more terrible world war. . . .

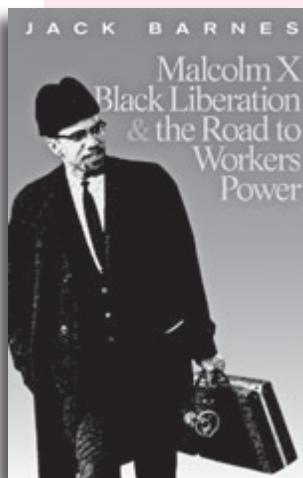
The [Russian] revolution survived, but not without terrible cost. On the basis of the hunger and the scarcity and the backwardness and the isolation arose the reactionary, privileged bureaucracy, personified by Stalin. The crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy are known to everyone present here. They debased the theory which had guided the revolution. They destroyed the party that had made the revolution. They destroyed the soviets and the trade unions as self-acting organisms of the workers. They assassinated a whole generation of the leaders of the revolution. They beheaded the Red Army, and they capped their series of unprecedented crimes against the people by the assassination of the most authentic representative of the revolution—Comrade Trotsky.

But they haven't, in spite of all that, been able to kill the revolution. There was something there that proved itself to be stronger than all the imperialist powers of the world in the early days, something stronger than the corroding and degenerating bureaucracy. . . .

The Russian Revolution is in the greatest peril today. We do not delude ourselves about that. We do not deceive ourselves or others with any false optimism about the danger confronting the Soviet Union. We see the situation as it really is. We know that the fate of the Soviet Union hangs in the balance, that it depends now, more than ever, on the world revolution of the proletariat and the colonial masses. But we have faith in the world revolution, and because of that, we retain our hope in the ultimate regeneration of the Soviet Union. We keep undimmed our faith that the world revolution will release humanity from this terrible vise of the war and open up a new stage of progress on the way to the communist future.

### Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

by Jack Barnes



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# Socialist Cuba sends doctors where they are needed

*Below is an excerpt from Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa by Mary-Alice Waters and Martin Koppel, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. Reporting from Equatorial Guinea in Central Africa, the authors focus on the social transformations unfolding, as revenues from offshore oil extraction are used to build infrastructure on which rising labor productivity, industry, and progress depend. Pulled into the world market as never before, both a capitalist class and a working class are being born. The book also highlights the work of volunteer Cuban medical brigades there as a living example of Cuba's socialist revolution. Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted with permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARTIN KOPPEL  
AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

BATA, Equatorial Guinea—"It took a lot of effort and will power. We had to learn how to study, and how to study long hours. But today we're graduating as doctors. We will be working to improve the health of the Guinean people," said Benjamín Ntutumu Mbá.

His remark captured the pride and confidence of the 21 doctors who graduated August 5 from the medical school here. They were among 102



Cuban medical brigade at hospital in Ebebiyin, Equatorial Guinea, July 2008. In back row at left is Dr. Tebelio Concepción, dean of medical school in Bata; and two Guinean medical students, Fulgencio Nsue Mba and Armando Nsue Ela.

students in the class of 2008 at the National University of Equatorial Guinea (UNGE) who received their diplomas. Now they are starting their first jobs as MDs at hospitals and clinics across the country.

The university's medical school in Bata, led and staffed by Cuban doctors for almost a decade, opened in 2000 as part of a program of medical cooperation between the governments of Equatorial Guinea and Cuba. Cuba committed itself to send brigades of doctors, nurses, and lab technicians—today they number 160—to help staff hospitals and public health centers throughout this Central African country. The medical school is training hundreds of Guinean doctors and nurses whose goal is to progressively replace the Cuban personnel currently providing almost all primary health care.

The training of Guinean doctors, committed to improve health conditions in their country, is no small achievement in one of the least industrialized countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Equatorial Guinea shares with the rest of the region a centuries-long legacy of colonial and imperialist domination. As in much of Central Africa, malaria is endemic, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, intestinal parasites, and sleeping sickness are widespread,

and the incidence of HIV/AIDS infection, while lower than in much of the region, has been increasing.

The health-care crisis inherited by Guineans is magnified by the very workings of the world capitalist system. Drawn by the lure of much higher salaries, better living conditions, and enticements of personal "career" advancement, medical personnel migrate to imperialist countries from Africa and other parts of the semi-colonial world. The head of Ghana's public health service, for example, reported in 2005 that the country had lost 30 percent of doctors trained there to the United States, Britain, Canada, and Australia. Some 5,300 physicians from sub-Saharan Africa were practicing in the United States alone, according to a 2004 study by Human Resources for Health.

The training offered by the Cuban-run medical program, like the Cuban Revolution itself, imbues students with a different class perspective. Instead of promoting personal "advancement," it is based on social solidarity and providing health care as a human right. It seeks to instill a determination to bring medical services to working people in isolated rural areas and small towns for whom such care has previously been inaccessible and unaffordable. . . .

Such medical collaboration is an expression of the proletarian internationalist course that has marked Cuba's socialist revolution for half a century.

In 1963 the very first Cuban medical brigade volunteered to go to Africa. They went to newly independent Algeria, less than a year after the French colonial regime had been defeated by the Algerian National Liberation Front in a long and bitter war.

That same year, Cuba responded to a request by Algeria's workers and peasants government to send weapons and volunteer combatants to help deter an imperialist-backed assault by the Moroccan regime. Over the decades, Cuban internationalists have fought alongside anti-imperialist forces throughout Africa—from the Congo to Guinea-Bissau to Angola—as well as in Latin America.

That tens of thousands of Cuban medical personnel are today providing health care in the most hard-to-reach parts of countries the world over is one of the most demonstrative expressions of the socialist character of the revolution that Cuban workers and farmers carried out, overturning capitalist property relations and transforming the consciousness of millions. No other country in the world is capable of anything remotely comparable, nor does any other government want to do so.

As Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara, himself a physician, explained and demonstrated by his own example, "To be a revolutionary doctor, you must first make a revolution." In Cuba not only has health care—an expensive commodity under capitalism—become free and available to all as a basic right, but those who become medical workers are educated in that spirit.

As of 2008, more than 38,000 Cuban doctors, dentists, nurses, and medical technicians are working as volunteers in 73 countries, according to Cuba's Ministry of Health. That includes 1,500 medical personnel in 35 African countries. Cuban personnel are responsible for medical schools not only in Equatorial Guinea but in Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Eritrea.

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# Indonesia disaster is man-made

The death, injury, and devastation inflicted on working people in Indonesia from the tsunami and volcanic eruption—like the re-emergence of cholera in Haiti—are man-made disasters reproduced by the capitalist system, which puts the profits of a few before the lives of toiling humanity. As the crisis of the exploiters’ economic system deepens worldwide, such unnecessary calamities will be forced upon working people with greater frequency and magnitude.

Even after the 2004 tsunami in the south Pacific that needlessly killed more than 225,000, devices that can provide early warning were not installed on the more remote and less developed islands of Indonesia. Imperialist domination and plunder of the country have left the great mass of working people with few roads, airports, or boats to deliver emergency relief. Malnutrition, lack of medical care, and poorly constructed housing has compounded the problem.

Desperately needed food, water, and medicines are sitting in storage instead of being delivered to the most ravaged areas. Imperialist governments have pledged only a few million dollars in emergency aid. And such promises are never guaranteed. After the earthquake that devastated Haiti in January of this year, not one penny of the \$1.15 billion promised by the U.S. government has been delivered. Now cholera, a disease that was eliminated in Haiti decades ago, has returned and threatens to sweep through the island.

Modern society has the scientific and technical ability to minimize the effect of disease and natural disasters. Cholera can be quickly cured with an inexpensive medicine. Sophisticated instruments exist to track earthquakes and tsunamis. Yet with all the wealth produced by the working class, more than 15 percent of the world’s population lacks clean drinking water; one-third have no access to elementary medicines; and 40 percent live on less than \$2 a day. So long as the capitalist profit system goes on, land will remain private property and working people will be forced to live in the worst areas, including in the path of hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and on coastal floodplains.

The working class can’t prevent floods or earthquakes but we can control what happens before, during, and after they hit. To do that will take a socialist revolution, where workers seize state power and use it to reorganize all of society in the interests of working people—building roads, hospitals, mass transportation, and quality housing; installing communication systems throughout rural areas; and providing health care for all. The example of the Cuban Revolution, and its success in minimizing death from the same hurricanes that devastated Haiti, speaks volumes.

As we fight for that day, working people can raise now the demand that Washington and other imperialist powers provide massive aid to Indonesia and Haiti with no strings attached and cancel their foreign debt.

# Union organizing at Delta Air Lines

**Continued from front page**

other 16,500 passenger service (ticket and reservation) agents are voting through December 7.

The IAM has been holding rallies at several hubs to counter the company’s antiunion campaign and to get out the union vote. With the defeat of the organizing drive by the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), union members are stepping up their work.

In a phone interview, Marty Knaeble, a baggage handler at Delta Air Lines from the Detroit area, said, “Since the flight attendants’ vote was so close, we need to make every effort to get workers to cast their vote for the union. The stakes are huge. We need the union to protect our livelihoods and jobs.”

Totaling more than 50,000 workers, the Delta union elections are the largest to take place in more than five decades in the United States.

The second biggest carrier in the country, Delta Air Lines has been the least organized of the major airlines. In 2008 Delta’s largely nonunionized workforce merged with Northwest’s unionized workforce. Before the merger Delta had 33,915 nonunion workers compared to 16,723 union workers at Northwest.

This was the third time the flight attendants’ union has lost an election at Delta. However, unlike the previous votes this one was extremely close. It follows years of cuts and rule changes by the airlines that have deeply affected workers’ lives.

The election was the first in the airline industry where a union is recognized if a majority of the votes cast are in favor. In the past, workers in the airlines

and on the railroads who didn’t vote were counted as “no” votes.

Delta and other airlines lobbied heavily against the ruling by the federal government’s National Mediation Board that went into effect in July, reversing the 70-year-old practice guiding union elections in those industries. Workers at airlines and railroads now vote under the same rules as workers at other companies. Under the old rules, the union victory at Piedmont would have been declared a defeat because 1,200 workers who didn’t vote would have automatically been counted as voting against the union.

As voting continues at Delta, organizing drives at smaller airlines have picked up in recent months. Flight attendants at Allegiant Airlines filed a petition in late October with the National Mediation Board asking for a union election for the Transport Workers Union of America (TWU), which has also been organizing campaigns at Virgin Airways and JetBlue Airways.

Bloomberg News reported that the vote rejecting the union at Delta “may be nullified” by the National Mediation Board. The union may demand a revote or recount, in which votes cast from company computers would be nullified. The AFA has until November 12 to file interference charges against Delta.

“The flight attendant vote surprised me,” said Vern Hammarsten, a ramp worker at Delta here. “We need to show more resolve and organize to get out the vote. It’s crucial that we stay union.”

# U.S. rulers’ covert operations in Yemen

**Continued from front page**

simmering independence movement in the south and a rebellion in the north by Houthis, a Shiite minority.

Since coming to power in 1990, the Saleh government has relied on alliances with armed Islamist groups and tribal militias in the country to suppress opposition. But over the last several years, the government’s alliance with Washington has brought it into conflict with AQAP, which finally declared war on Saleh’s regime this past summer.

Just as Washington used the failed mail bombs as a pretext to increase its militarization of U.S. airports, the government in the United Kingdom is using the incident to press for greater powers for the secret police. Home Secretary Theresa May announced November 3 that there will be “significant changes” to the country’s “counterterrorism” laws. She said this would include giving police more access to individu-

als’ e-mail accounts and cell phone records, as well as weapons training.

May said al-Qaeda forces in Pakistan and Afghanistan pose less of a threat to Britain than AQAP, al-Shabab in Somalia, and al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb in North Africa. Some British residents have gone to Somalia for training with al-Shabab, she asserted. “Left to their own devices we would eventually see British extremists, trained and hardened on the streets of [Somalia’s capital] Mogadishu, returning to the UK and seeking to commit mass murder on the streets of London,” she predicted.

May reported that an AQAP “associate” was arrested in the United Kingdom earlier this year on charges of planning an attack on a passenger airplane. She said he was in contact with Anwar al-Awlaki, the U.S. citizen accused by the White House of being an AQAP leader and publicly targeted for assassination.

# Fed prints money

**Continued from front page**

through the purchase of U.S. Treasury bonds caused an immediate drop in the value of the U.S. dollar and a rise in the stock market.

Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke compared the \$600 billion infusion to the more than \$1 trillion bailout the Fed carried out after the “economic free fall,” which took place at the end of 2008. He said the money would cause mortgage rates to drop, encourage investment, and lead to “higher stock prices [which] will boost consumer wealth,” spending, and a “virtuous circle” of economic expansion.

John Hussman, president of the Hussman Investment Trust, in his weekly note to investors called Bernanke’s statement “among the most ignorant remarks ever made by a central banker.” Hussman pointed out that the measure risks causing “an overpriced speculative bubble with devastating consequences.”

Two major recipients of the earlier bailout, the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac mortgage finance companies, are still in dire straits. Fannie Mae just reported a \$1.3 billion third quarter loss and Freddie Mac a \$2.5 billion loss. They are asking for billions more in government aid.

Fannie Mae says it has foreclosed on nearly 167,000 homes and has written off \$8.2 billion in uncollectible loans. The drop in home prices, high unemployment, and foreclosures will continue.

Newspaper headlines highlighted a supposed growth of 151,000 jobs in the United States in October based on a Labor Department employer survey. But a separate Labor Department survey of households released at the same time said that the number of people employed dropped by 330,000. Even the more upbeat employer survey indicated that a large part of October hiring was due to retailers preparing for the holiday season, and temporary agencies.

It is unlikely that the \$600 billion will have any meaningful effect on loans or investment, even in the short term. U.S. companies are already sitting on \$1.8 trillion in cash reserves. In the face of declining rates of profit, capitalists prefer to hold onto cash—essentially nothing more than a notation on a computer hard drive—than to invest in plants and equipment, which does not bring what they consider sufficient returns. Instead they seek ways to use money to “make money” by speculation in stocks, bonds, currency, or derivatives. Adding billions to the money supply, what the Fed calls “quantitative easing,” can do nothing to change this.

## Controversial move

The Federal Reserve’s decision was controversial around the world. For at least half a decade, Washington has deliberately weakened the dollar relative to its strongest rivals from France and Germany to China and Japan. Answering criticism that the Federal Reserve was seeking to further lower the value of the U.S. dollar and thereby make U.S.-made products cheaper on the world market, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner claimed, “We will never use our currency as a tool to gain competitive advantage.”

Government officials in China, Germany, and Brazil criticized the Fed’s move. Some of the sharpest comments came from German finance minister Wolfgang Schäuble. “It doesn’t add up when the Americans accuse the Chinese of currency manipulation and then, with the help of their central bank’s printing presses, artificially lower the value of the dollar,” he said.

Schäuble was referring to U.S. pressure on China to raise the value of the renminbi, which the Chinese government has resisted. Washington charges that the renminbi’s value is kept artificially low, spurring Chinese exports and contributing to the U.S. trade deficit with China. Washington has also criticized Bonn for its high exports. Germany is the largest economy in Europe and the fifth largest in the world.

As the worldwide capitalist economic crisis continues, trade disputes are heating up. In September China’s commerce ministry announced it was imposing a tariff of up to 105.4 percent on U.S. poultry imports. The move is seen as retaliation for the Barack Obama administration’s imposition of steep tariffs on Chinese tires a year ago. In October Washington said it plans to slap a 60 percent duty on Chinese aluminum extrusions.